

Russian fisheries back on old heights



The Russian fish industry in 2010 caught a total of 4,1 million tons of fish, which is on the level of 1991. This is historical, the leader of Russia's Fishery Agency underlines.

By **Atle Staalesen**

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-Russian fishermen in 2010 made a historical step – we have returned catch volumes to the level of 1991, Fishery Agency leader Andrei Krainy told Prime Minister Vladimir Putin in a [meeting](#) this weekend. Results from 2010 show that a total of 4,1 million tons of fish was caught, which is comparable with the catch of the Russian Federation as part of the Soviet Union in 1991.

In the Post-Soviet period, Russia's fish catch dropped 20 percent and in 2005 totaled about 3,2 million tons. That placed Russia as the 9th biggest fishery nation in the world. With the 2010 results, the country climbs to place number six on the catch ranking.

Ever since the break-up of the Soviet Union, Russia's fishing industry has been struggling with the fact that the trawlers find it more economical profitable to reload the fish directly to transport vessels in open ocean instead of landing the fish in ports like Murmansk. The first steps to abolish customs clearance for fish products were taken in early 2010, something which has subsequently improved the situation for the industry.

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According to Krainy, as much as 4,2 million tons of processed fishery products were in 2010 produced by Russian industry. Russian-produced goods now account for 77,5 percent of the fishery products sold in Russian shops, the fishery leader says and adds that the level will increase to at least 80 percent already in 2-3 years.

Krainy also told the prime minister that the fishery processing industry currently is in a major modernization phase and that technology and quality by 2016 will be far better.

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The Russian coastline is the world's fourth longest and the country's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) covers 7,6 million km² including access to twelve seas in three oceans. In addition, the country has the landlocked Caspian Sea and more than two million lakes and 130,000 rivers.

Some of the country's richest fishing grounds are in the Barents Sea. There, fishery management has been efficiently conducted by the Joint Norwegian-Russian Fishery Commission since 1976.

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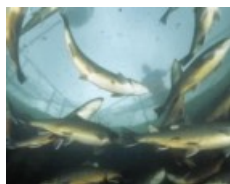
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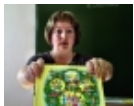
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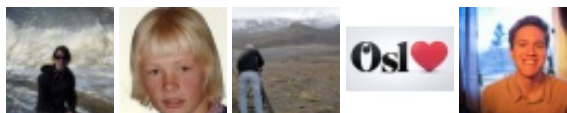
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